

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM

TO: Department of State (CA/OCS/ACS/EAP)

FROM: AmEmbassy Rangoon

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: DEATH: Disposition of Remains Report

REF: [7 FAM 260](#)

The following information is submitted in accordance with the referenced requirements. Various area mortuaries were surveyed in order to compile this data.

Part I. Name of Country

Burma

Part II. U.S. Embassy Information

Embassy of the United States of America
110 University Avenue
Kamayut Township
Rangoon, Burma 11041
Tel: +95 – 1- 536 509
Fax: +95 1-512 124
After Hours: +95 (0)9 512 4330

[Country Specific Information](#)

[State Department Travel Information](#)

[Register With the U.S. Embassy](#)

Part III. Profile of Religions of the Host Country and Religious Services available to visitors.

Please consult the Burma Country Profile on the [State Department's website](#).

Burma is a country of approximately 56 million people. A multitude of ethnic groups populate the country, the majority being Burman (68%). Other major ethnicities include Shan (9%), Karen (7%), Rakhine (4%), Chinese (3%), Mon (2%), and Indian (2%). Nearly 90 % of Burmese are Buddhist. Christians (4% total – Baptist 3%, Roman Catholic 1%), Muslims (4%) and animists (1%) are in much smaller numbers.

Rangoon has Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Armenian, and Seventh-day Adventist churches, a Jewish synagogue, and a Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall. English services are conducted regularly. There is a nondenominational international Christian group that meets at Bishop Court (4th Floor) on Pyitaungsu Road in Alone township, not far from the Indonesian Embassy. Services are conducted in English. There are also numerous Buddhist meditation centers (some of which are popular with foreigners and offer instruction in English), a Sikh temple, Muslim mosques, and Hindu temples.

Part IV. Funeral Directors, Mortician and Related Services Available in the Host Country:

DISCLAIMER: The U.S. Embassy Rangoon, Burma assumes no responsibility or liability for the professional ability or reputation of, or the quality of services provided by, the following persons or firms. Names are listed alphabetically, and the order in which they appear has no other significance. Professional credentials and areas of expertise are provided directly by the funeral directors, morticians and other service providers.

AsiaOne International Repatriation

c/o Unlimited Express (Myanmar Co. Ltd)
Room 1003 10th floor Yuzana Condo Tower
No 69 Shwe Goen Daing Rd, Bahan Township
Rangoon

Mac Loh tel: +65 96313729 (24/7)

San Lin tel: +95 9 511 2152

Office Tel: +95 1-558 660

Fax: +95 1-558 664

Email: info@asiaonemyanmar.com Website: www.asiaone-thf.com

SOS International Clinic

Dusit Inya Lake Resort
37 Kaba Aye Pagoda Road
Yangon

Tel: +95 1 657 922 or +95 1-657 940

Fax: +95 1 667 866

Website: <https://www.internationalsos.com/locations/asia-pacific/myanmar>

Yangon General Hospital Mortuary

No 262 Merchant Street

Rangoon

Tel: +95 1-256 112 ext 875

Yayway Cemetary

North Okklapa Township

Rangoon

Tel: +95 – 1-701 123/ +95 9-731-67881

Contact : U Tun Aung Kyaw/U San Shein

YMCA

No 263 Mahabandoola Street

Botataung Township

Rangoon

Tel: +95 -1- 294109, 294128, 203027

Fax: +95-1-295 848

Email: yangonymca@myanmar.com.mm; yangonymca@mptmail.net.mm

Part V. Profile of services available in the host country regarding preparation and shipment of remains

NOTE TO READERS: All prices listed in this document are subject to change. Please confirm prices with the service providers listed.

1. Maximum Period Before Burial of Remains:

Burmese Law does not stipulate the maximum duration that a corpse may be left unburied; local health and police officials make case-by-case determinations. Ordinarily, disposition of remains should be addressed as soon as possible; if necessary, however, disposition can be delayed up to 72 hours after death if the body can be refrigerated. Embalming generally makes it possible to delay disposing of a corpse until a week after death. If a significant time elapses before a corpse is refrigerated, health and police officials usually press for early disposition. In Rangoon, Yayway Mortuary has a refrigeration unit with 80 stainless steel chambers. The chambers are German style (8' long), and cost 1,500 kyat per day. To use a chamber, if the death occurred at home, you must present a certification of death from the ward office in which the decedent lived and state the cause of death. If the death occurred at a hospital you must present the hospital death certificate. Yangon General Hospital Mortuary has approximately 25 refrigerated chambers and costs approximately \$10.00 per day.

2. **Embalming:**

In order to export remains, embalming is required. Embalming is not a practice typically performed in Burma, however. Burma has no Western-style funeral homes.

Yangon General Hospital Mortuary [contact: Mortuary Duty Staff, tel: 256112, Ext.875] can provide embalming services; the estimated cost is approximately \$250.

3. **Cremation:**

For religious and practical reasons, cremation is most commonly practiced in Burma, and would be the most suitable method of preparing a U.S. citizen's remains for export. All cemeteries offer this service. A letter from the US Embassy authorizing the release of the body for cremation may be requested by the mortuary or crematorium. If this is the case, please contact the Consular Section (+95 -1 536 509 or after hours +95 (0)9 512 4330).

In Rangoon, both Yayway and Yangon General Mortuaries can arrange for cremation and ash collection. Prices for foreigners are higher than the government prices for Burmese citizens. A casket is often bought to transport the body from the hospital or home to the crematorium. Yangon General Mortuary provides a hearse service to the airport or cemetery.

Note: Cremation processes in Burma are significantly different from those in the United States. The remains are usually partially burnt and then the bones washed and ground to create 'ashes'. This makes the ashes considerably lighter by weight and smaller in volume compared with those remains cremated in the United States. An "Urn" is usually in the form of a lacquer or wooden box.

4. **Caskets and Containers:**

Most locally manufactured caskets are suitable for local burial only. The standard size is 6'x18" (adjustable with no additional fees). Caskets for export are also available.

Locally manufactured wooden and clay containers for cremated ashes are available, but these would not be suitable for international shipment. International airlines will accept wooden boxes containing cremated remains in an urn.

In any death involving traumatic injury, it would almost certainly be necessary to weld the casket shut after the body is embalmed.

5. **Exporting Remains:**

The Police Surgeon, the Controller of Foreign Exchange, Customs, Immigration and MOFA must cooperate to approve the export of remains. Delays must be expected while these offices process the needed paperwork. The following documents are required to export remains:

1. *A death certificate from the Police Surgeon's Office.

2. *A receipt from the crematorium, if the remains are cremated.
3. *An export permit from the Customs Service.
4. Certificate from a Customs Preventative Officer attesting to the sealing of the casket or container.
5. *Police Surgeon's affidavit that the casket contains only the deceased plus necessary clothing and packing (or, in the case of cremation, that the box includes only the ashes of the deceased); that the remains have been embalmed; that the casket or container has been properly sealed, and is free from communicable diseases. This affidavit should be executed before a consular officer.
6. Approval of airport immigration officials.
7. *Consular mortuary certificate.

* = these documents need to accompany the remains during travel

6. **Costs:**

In general, cremation and repatriation costs may total around \$5,000-\$8,000. Embalming and repatriation costs may be around \$10,000.

Note: prices are estimates only and will depend on the circumstances.

As of November 2015: USD1 = 1280 Kyat

Item or Service	Kyat (local currency)	U.S. Dollar equivalent
Yangon General Mortuary refrigeration units daily charge	12,800	10
Medical investigation of cause-of-death	320,000	250
Embalming	192,000	150
Hearse from a Yangon vicinity to airport	192,000-256,000	150-200
Hearse from a Yangon vicinity to cemetery	89,600	70
Cremation/ash collection/cemetery charges	10,240	8
Urn + teak crate for export	50,000	80
Cement tomb + plot 3'x 7'x 3' + grave digging (Christian)	250,000	200
Terrazzo tomb + plot 3'x 7'x 3' + grave digging (Christian)	400,000	300
Locally manufactured plain wood casket (export with zinc liner and crate)	960,000	750
Locally manufactured teak casket (export with zinc liner and crate)	1,280,000	1000
Plain wood casket with plastic interior (non-export)	64,000	50

Teak casket with two layers (plastic and cloth) interior (non-export)	832,000	650
Immigration and airport clearance agent charges	1,024,000	800
Miscellaneous charges ('service' fees and other admin costs)	512,000	400

Airfreight for uncremated remains:

The average weight of a casket and its container required for the export of remains is 220 kilos. Listed below are prices for airfreight shipment of remains from Rangoon to various places in the continental United States. There may be additional charges for transfer between flights. There are currently no direct flights from Burma to the United States.

Delta Airlines has recently increased their human remains shipping charges to the United States. For example, costs may exceed \$10, 000 for shipping from Rangoon to New York.

	Rate per kilo in USD	Total in USD
Los Angeles	\$ 11.00	\$2,420.00*
Chicago	\$ 13.35	\$2,937.00*
New York	\$ 13.00	\$2,860.00*

Airfreight for cremated remains:

The average weight of cremated ashes plus a clay container is 10 kilos.

	Total in USD
Los Angeles	\$400.00*
Chicago	\$400.00*
New York	\$400.00*

*plus a \$5.00 fee for an airway bill, \$0.90 per kilo for Fuel Surcharge and War Risk surcharge

7. **Exhumation:**

The police, local government, and health authorities must authorize exhumation. In the case of foreigners, the Burmese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) also needs to give consent. MOFA grants such authorization only if there is reasonable suspicion of foul play. It may take many months before all approvals are received for an exhumation.

8. **Autopsies:**

All death cases of non-Burmese citizens must undergo an autopsy at the government hospital nearest their place of death. A preliminary finding of cause of death is usually released within a few days of the autopsy, with the full report being available about 4 weeks later. Contact at Yangon General Mortuary is Police Surgeon Prof. Myo Thaik Oo or his assistant Dr. Khin Maung Htwe (off. tel: +95-1 379868/256112 Ext.874).

9. **Final Remarks:**

Cost estimates are applicable to Rangoon. In other areas of Burma the cost of disposition of remains would be comparable, but refrigeration and embalming services would not be available.

Human remains can be exported only from Rangoon. If a U.S. citizen dies elsewhere in Burma, the next-of-kin will also have to pay to transport the body to Rangoon, the cost depending on the mode of transportation and the distance from Rangoon. Burma's hot and humid climate, the chronic lack of cargo space on available domestic flights, and the lack of ambulance services, can make it extremely difficult to arrange for repatriation of remains to the United States.

Embalming in Burma is of a much lower quality than in the United States. A funeral director in the U.S. should be consulted to determine the advisability of viewing the remains and of conducting an open casket funeral.

UPDATED: November 2015